Importance of Country and Place

This learning sequence comprises two short inquiries.

## Topic – Community and remembrance

3 weeks – 90 minutes per week

### Key inquiry question

* Who lived here first and how do we know?

### Overview

This topic provides a study of the Aboriginal identity and culture in the local area. This learning sequence consists of two short inquiries – connecting to Country and Aboriginal Dreaming stories. In the first, students investigate the importance of Country and Place to the local Aboriginal people. They identify Aboriginal languages spoken and learn about the special relationship Aboriginal people have with Country. In the second, students explore Dreaming stories. They explore how Dreaming stories explain local connection to Country and respond to Dreaming stories that are presented to them using a variety of sources.

### Outcomes

A student:

* HT2-2 describes and explains how significant individuals, groups and events contributed to changes in the local community over time
* HT2-5 applies skills of historical inquiry and communication

### Content

The importance of Country and Place to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples who belong to a local area. (This is intended to be a local area study with a focus on one Language group; however, if information or sources are not readily available, another representative area may be studied.) (ACHHK060)

Students:

* identify the original Aboriginal languages spoken in the local or regional area 
* identify the special relationship that Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples have to Country and Place.
* respond to Aboriginal stories told about Country presented in texts or by a guest speaker.

#### Historical inquiry skills

Comprehension: chronology, terms and concepts

* respond, read and write, to show understanding of historical matters
* sequence familiar people and events (ACHHS065, ACHHS081)
* use historical terms (ACHHS066, ACHHS082)

Analysis and use of sources

* locate relevant information from sources provided (ACHHS068, ACHHS084, ACHHS215, ACHHS216)
* Perspectives and interpretations
* identify different points of view within an historical context (ACHHS069, ACHHS085)

Empathetic understanding

* explain how and why people in the past may have lived and behaved differently from today

Research

* pose a range of questions about the past (ACHHS067, ACHHS083)
* plan an historical inquiry

Explanation and communication

* develop texts, particularly narratives (ACHHS070, ACHHS086)
* use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies (ACHHS071, ACHHS087)

### Selected historical concepts

Perspectives – people from the past will have different views and experiences, for example, views on the arrival of the British in Australia from a British and an Aboriginal point of view.

Empathetic understanding – developing an understanding of another's views, life and decisions made, for example, developing an understanding of the life and attitudes of an early colonist or convict.

Significance – importance of an event, development or individual/group, eg the significance/importance of national days/holidays; the significance of the contributions of an early settler.

Syllabus extracts are quoted from [History K-10 Syllabus](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/hsie/history-k-10) © 2012 NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales.

### Assessment

All activities require students to demonstrate their learning. All are assessment for learning activities.

### Vocabulary

Ask, listen, investigate, locate, explore, examine, identify, describe, recall, explain, discuss, illustrate, write, present, role play, reflect

Time, past, history, importance,

Story, photograph, map, book, video, event, source, reliability

Aboriginal, Country, Place, land, local, relationship, stories, language

## Teaching and learning activities

This learning sequence comprises two inquiries.

### Inquiry 1 – connecting to Country

Students investigate the importance of Country and Place to the local Aboriginal people. They identify Aboriginal languages spoken and learn about the special relationship Aboriginal people have with Country.

The inquiry questions below should be localised to represent your local Aboriginal community. The [NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG)](https://www.aecg.nsw.edu.au/) website provides contact details for your local Aboriginal representative who will be able to assist you with further information.

Note – if Aboriginal students are present, inform them that throughout the lessons, images of Aboriginal people who may now be deceased may be shown.

#### Stimulus

Ask students: When you think of the word Country what do you think of? As a class brainstorm the word Country.

Show students Source 1 – [Aboriginal languages in NSW map](https://indigenous-services-slnsw.tumblr.com/image/141124712404) from NSW Reconciliation Council which shows the different Aboriginal languages and countries in NSW. Tell students that the word Country is special to Aboriginal people as it is the place that they are connected to through family. It also represents their connection to nature and land, Dreamtime ancestors and the Dreaming and language, culture, customs and responsibilities. Each Aboriginal Country has its own language, traditions, stories and special places.

#### Historical inquiry step 1 – question

After exploring the map, and guided by the syllabus dot points, generate a class set of inquiry questions, for example:

* What do we know about connection to Country?
* Why is connection to Country special for Aboriginal people?
* How do we know about connection to Country?

Note ­– inquiry questions may need to be redesigned through the historical inquiry process.

#### Historical inquiry steps 2 and 3 – research and anlayse

**Connection to Country**

Introduce a Consensogram to students. A Consensogram is a tool used to identify the knowledge level that a student has on a topic based on student’s own self-evaluation. Students rate themselves on a scale of one to ten about a question. A ‘one’ means limited knowledge and a ‘ten’ means they think they could teach the class about the topic. Ask students to use the tool to represent their knowledge of the local Aboriginal people and culture.

Using an Aboriginal language map locate your local area and identify the local language group/s. An example of the resources you may be able to use include the campfire in the [WilderQuest](https://wilderquest.nsw.gov.au/) website or the map on the [First languages](https://gambay.com.au/map/) website. Each resource has teaching notes and ideas on how to use the languages map as a stimulus to explore the link between Aboriginal people and their connection to Country.

View the video [Who we are: Country/Place](https://www.narragunnawali.org.au/curriculum-resource/125/who-we-are-countryplace-primary) (6:29min) from Reconciliation Australia. After viewing the video provide students with sticky notes and ask them to write words or sentences that describe what they think Country means to Aboriginal people. Why is it so important to them?

Sit in a yarning circle and ask students to think of a place that is special to them. Allow each student to tell a personal story about a connection to a special place. Students create an artwork of their special place. Display the artworks on the wall with the heading ‘Our special places’.

As a class reflect on the special relationship that Aboriginal people have with the land which is similar to the connection they have with their special place. This is part of their connection to Country.

Ask students to use the Consensogram tool to represent whether their knowledge of local Aboriginal people and culture has improved as a result of the inquiries.

#### Historical inquiry step 4 – evaluate

Ask the students to recall some of the sources used to collect information about Aboriginal peoples connection to Country. Discuss the reliability of the sources. Whose view is presented? What might be missing or forgotten?

#### Historical inquiry step 5 – communicate

**Creating a text to support connection to Country**

Ask students to think about the following question: Why is connection to Country important to Aboriginal people? Students create a short information text, video or animation to share their responses.

**Reflection**

Students reflect on the historical inquiry process, reflecting on what they learnt, how they learnt it and what else they would like to find out about Aboriginal connection to Country.

### Inquiry 2 – Aboriginal Dreaming stories

Students explore Dreaming stories. They explore how Dreaming stories explain local connection to Country and respond to Dreaming stories that are presented to them using a variety of sources.

Note – if Aboriginal students are present, inform them that throughout the lessons, images of Aboriginal people who may now be deceased may be shown.

#### Stimulus

Examine the Aboriginal artwork in source 2. What do you see in the artwork? What does it make you think of? What do you wonder about?

Brainstorm what the word Dreaming means. Tell students that Dreaming stories are told by Aboriginal people to teach a lesson or to explain something about how things were created.

Source 2 – Aboriginal Art centrepiece Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games opening ceremony



[Wikimedia Commons](https://tinyurl.com/y4jjubqo). [CC BY-SA 3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/deed.en)

#### Historical inquiry step 1 – question

After observing the artwork, and guided by the syllabus dot points, generate a class set of inquiry questions, for example:

* What do Dreaming stories tell us?
* How do they explain local Aboriginal people’s connection to County?
* Why do you think Aboriginal people share Dreaming stories?

Note ­– inquiry questions may need to be redesigned through the historical inquiry process.

#### Historical inquiry steps 2 and 3 – research and anlayse

**Explore Dreaming stories**

Ask students to do a think-pair-share about Dreaming stories that they have heard.

Students think about Dreaming stories they have heard, choose one and explain to a partner what it taught them and then share both their answers with the class.

Visit the WilderQuest website. Go to the Campfire and click on the moon interactive to view source 3 – [Man in the moon Dreaming story](https://wilderquest.nsw.gov.au/#/dream-time/video), NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. Discuss the meaning of the story and identify the audience and purpose.

Invite a local Aboriginal person to tell a Dreaming story about the local area. Students ask questions to clarify the meaning of the story. As a class identify the audience and purpose of the story. What did the story teach you about the local area?

Read or view a variety of Dreaming stories that are told about Country or that explain the creation of a living thing, landform or environmental feature. If possible find stories that explain something about the local area. Identify and acknowledge the sources of the stories – both the tellers and the Country. Some examples of stories specific to different parts of NSW and Queensland mouninclude:

Source 4 – [Biladurang – a Wiradjuri creation story](https://youtu.be/4IVp3m4hTHw), Free Range Multimedia, YouTube (4:53min) (central NSW)

Source 5 – [Burning Mountain – a Wonnarua Tribe story](https://vimeo.com/223222020), Armchair Productions, Vimeo (0:48min) (Burning Mountain is the common name for Mount Wingen in NSW and smoke rises from it from a smouldering seam of coal deep underground.)

Source 6 – [The giants of Moungibi country](http://education.abc.net.au/home#!/media/3337028/the-giants-of-moungibi-country), ABC Education video (2:47min) (Burketown, Queensland)

Source 7 – [Birian Balunah: the birthing of the rivers](http://education.abc.net.au/home#!/media/3382912/birian-balunah-the-birthing-of-the-rivers), ABC Education video (4:30min) (Beenleigh, Queensland)

After viewing each story ask students what are the stories about, what they explain and why Aboriginal people share Dreaming stories.

Students choose one of the Dreaming stories they have read or heard in a book, online or retold by a local Aboriginal person. Ask students to create a story map of the main events that happened in the story. Students use the story map to create a painting, digital animation, dance or role play to express the key messages in the story. Students present their artworks to the class explaining the meaning of the story they chose.

As a class recall the purpose of Dreaming stories, how they explain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ connection to Country aand Place and why Aboriginal people tell Dreaming stories.

#### Historical inquiry step 4 – evaluate

Discuss the different Dreaming stories. How do they provide us with information about the past? Do the inquiry questions need to be redesigned as a result of analysing and evaluating sources?

#### Historical inquiry step 5 – communicate

**Compose a narrative**

Students compose a narrative about their local area, or a plant, animal or special feature of their local area. The narrative should use descriptive language to describe the area or feature, perhaps its origins, what is special about it and how to care for it. Ask students to consider the purpose and message of their story as well as the audience.

Students create a storyboard of the main events in their story and then write and illustrate the story using paper or digital devices.

**Reflection**

Ask students to use the Consensogram tool to represent whether their knowledge of local Aboriginal people and culture has improved as a result of the inquiries. Students reflect on what they learnt, how they found out and what else they would like to know.

#### Resources

**Videos**

[Who we are: Country/Place](https://www.narragunnawali.org.au/curriculum-resource/125/who-we-are-countryplace-primary), Reconciliation Australia (6:29min)

[Mungo National Park](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7WC8tZS4EmM.), Australia, The Travel Bug, YouTube (7:10min)

[Biladurang – a Wiradjuri creation story](https://youtu.be/4IVp3m4hTHw), Free Range Multimedia, YouTube (4:53min)

[Burning Mountain – a Wonnarua Tribe story](https://vimeo.com/223222020), Armchair Productions, Vimeo (0:48min)

[The giants of Moungibi country](http://education.abc.net.au/home#!/media/3337028/the-giants-of-moungibi-country), ABC Education video (2:47min)

[Birian Balunah: the birthing of the rivers](http://education.abc.net.au/home#!/media/3382912/birian-balunah-the-birthing-of-the-rivers), ABC Education video (4:30min)

**Websites**

[NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG)](https://www.aecg.nsw.edu.au/)

[First languages map](https://gambay.com.au/map/), First Languages Australia

[Bruce Pascoe: Aboriginal agriculture, technology and ingenuity](http://education.abc.net.au/home#!/digibook/3122184/bruce-pascoe-aboriginal-agriculture-technology-and-ingenuity), ABC Splash

[WilderQuest](https://wilderquest.nsw.gov.au/), National Parks and Wildlife Service NSW

[NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service](https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/), Aboriginal Cultural Tours

[Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and cultures](http://education.abc.net.au/home#!/topic/494038/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-histories-and-cultures), ABC Education

[Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collection timeline](https://australianmuseum.net.au/learn/cultures/atsi-collection/timeline/), Australian Museum